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Approved For Release 2001/12/05 : CIA-RDP83-00415R007300010004-5

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

REPORT NO.

INFORMATION REPORT

CD NO.

COUNTRY Germany (Russian Zone)/USSR

DATE DISTR.

26 January 1951

25X1A

PLACE

ACQUIRED

DATE OF

INFO.

SUBJECT Shipbuilding Department of MSP, Berlin, Ordered to Design Cable Layer

NO. OF PAGES

NO. OF ENCLS.

2 booklets\*

SUPPLEMENT TO REPORT NO.

25X1X

- In 1947 the project section of the shipbuilding department of the ISP Derlin was ordered to design a cable-layer.
- 2. The design was to be for a vessel displacing about 2,500 tons, drawing 4.5 to 5 meters, with a cruising speed of 8 kmots, a maximum speed of 12 kmots in a sea force of three Beaufort scale and a cruising range of not less than 1,500 nautical miles at cruising speed. A complement of 45 hands and a working party of 34 hands for handling the cables were to be accommodated. Installations and storerooms had to be planned for a cruise of two months.
- 3. The structural system was to be as light as possible, but at the same time had to include strong plating and ice doubling at the bows. The entire iron hull was to be electrically welded. Section building was to be employed as for as possible in order to insure uniform execution of welding in workshops and exclude any interfering influence from weather on the assembly work. Most careful technological and organizational instructions were issued concerning details of construction work. \*
- 4. The steering mechanism is operated by a push-button device from either the bridge or the rudder compartment. The rudder can also be operated by hand in case of power failure. A Behm ocho sounder, a laboratory for chemical and bacteriological tests and a pressure chamber for divers are available. Intercommunication aboard is through loud-speaker telephones. The crew's mess can also serve as a motion-picture theater.
- 5. Two elternative designs were prepared for the propelling plant; one proposed machinery of conventional type, consisting of two cylindrical boilers and a standard reciprocating engine working at 16 atmospheres and a steam temperature of 300°C; the other proposed modern machinery with two water-tube boilers and a nighspeed piston engine with gear and exhaust turbine. For a turbine plant the engine power required would be too small; on the other hand, Diesel engines would be unsuitable because of their comparatively strong vibrations, which would have adverse effects on measuring operations with the cables. The vessel is propelled by two shafts, each with a screw and a rudder, and is thus easy to handle, \*\*
- 6. The vessel can do all kinds of work on both telegraph and telephone cables up to a depth of 1,000 meters, and on power-current cables up to a depth of 100 noters. Laying cables is possible at greater depths.

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7. A particular feature of the vessel is that it may be used as a tanker.

Five oil-tight bulkheads, in addition to other installations required
for this, are available. The vessel can carry about 1,000 tons of oil.\*\*\*

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Comment. These careful specifications indicate that the Soviets try to improve their shippard operations by employing German methods and experience, especially in welding. They may also indicate that the Soviets strive to make it possible for less efficient shippards to build the vessel.

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Comment. The designs for the machinery show engines of higher speed, which, along with the arrangement of two rudders, insure good maneuvering and steering qualities at such low rates of speed as two to four knots, which are required for cable work. Similar machinery was used in minesweepers of the Corman Navy during the war and proved successful. The second design requires fewer but better—qualified personnel.

Comment. This is a remarkable feature and permits the use of the vessel for naval purposes. A vessel which can be handled safely at a speed of two to four knots would be most suitable for refueling operations at sea, using its installations for stowing cable and cable work and the working space on deck for handling oil hoses and fueling operations. It cannot be determined whether such a cable-layer was or is being constructed by a Soviet or Soviet-controlled shipyard. For specifications and plans for the vessels (in original Cerman), see Annex.

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2 Annex: Two folders in German.

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